

Short Talk

(SHT159)

Who is my neighbour?

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SHORT TALK: “Who is my neighbour?”

- Aim of Short talk:** To challenge people to obey God’s command to *“love your neighbour as yourself,”* by the things that they do.
- Use of Short talk:** This is a short All Age talk picking out one issue from the Lectionary Gospel reading of the Sunday main service. The talk stands alone and assumes that the Gospel Bible reading may not yet have been read to the congregation. It could be used for example, for the whole congregation before the children go out to their age specific groups, leaving the adults with a full sermon later.
- Main themes:** Good Samaritan, loving others, neighbour, actions
- Biblical references:** Luke 10:25-37
- Lectionary:** Year C – 4th Sunday after Trinity
- Props:** You will need 3 pieces of paper with the following words written in large letters on them:
1. Bishop
 2. Church Warden
 3. Afghan Refugee
- People:** You will need 4 adult/teen volunteers, at least 1 of whom needs to be a woman and one of whom needs to be a man. You may wish to brief them before the service.

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Today we are going to spend a few moments thinking about the second most important commandment that God has given to us;

- the commandment to *“love your neighbour as yourself.”* (Luke 10:27)

I wonder who you think your neighbour is?

- Is it the person living next door to you or is it someone else?

If we are going to obey God’s commandment to love our neighbours, then it is important that we know who our neighbours are, isn’t it?

- In fact, Jesus was asked the question: *“who is my neighbour?”* (Luke 10:29) by an expert in God’s law over 2000 years ago.

Jesus replied by telling a simple story which we are going to re-tell now in a 21st century setting.

- I need 4 volunteers to come and help me. (*Receive 4 volunteers whom you stand to one side of you*)

(*Place Volunteer 1 in front of you*) This is *N* (*name of volunteer*) who one Friday evening was cycling along a quiet country road when a car drove past them at top speed and knocked them off their bike.

N lay on the ground unconscious but the motorist, knowing that they had hit *N* quickly drove off so that they wouldn't be caught by the police. *(Ask Volunteer 1 to lie in the middle of the main aisle of the church where they are most visible to the congregation)*

It so happened that a Bishop was driving on the same road a few minutes later.

- When she saw *N* lying at the side of the road, she drove past them, knowing that she had important things to do that evening. *(Ask Volunteer 2 to "drive" past volunteer 1 and stand at the back of the church)*

A few moments later a church warden was also driving on the same road.

- When they saw *N* lying at the side of the road, they also drove past them, as they didn't want to get involved. *(Ask Volunteer 3 to "drive" past volunteer 1 and stand at the back of the church)*

And then another car appeared on the same road.

- It was driven by an Afghan refugee.

When he saw *N* lying at the side of the road, he stopped his car and got out.

- He slowly helped *N* get up, gently helped him/her into his car and drove them to the nearest hospital. *(Ask Volunteer 4 to "drive" to volunteer 1 then stop and help them up. Together they walk to the back of the church)*

A couple of hours later, once *N* was bandaged up, this Afghan man took *N* to the nearest small hotel where he booked them in for a couple of days,

- even paying the bill in advance and asking the hotel owner to make sure that *N* was OK.

Now can my volunteers come and line up at the front. *(All 4 volunteers line up in front of the congregation)*

- This is *N* who was in great need, after being knocked off their bike.
- The question I want to ask you is this: *"Which of these other 3 people do you think was a neighbour to N?"*

Was it:

- The Bishop *(Give to volunteer 2 the piece of paper that says BISHOP to hold up)*
- The Church Warden *(Give to volunteer 3 the piece of paper that says CHURCH WARDEN to hold up)* or was it
- The Afghan Refugee? *(Give to volunteer 4 the piece of paper that says AFGHAN REFUGEE to hold up)*

(Receive responses from the congregation to your question)

The Afghan Refugee, who was a different faith from *N* showed compassion didn't he?

- He gave up time and money to help *N* at their time of need, whereas the Bishop and the Church Warden didn't.
- The Afghan Refugee obeyed Jesus' command to love their neighbour as themselves.

Now this story might shock you.

- It certainly shocked people in Jesus' day when the person who helped the wounded man was a Samaritan, a foreigner who was hated by the Jewish people.

But the important point here is that because God loves all people, no matter what their religion or race is, we are to do the same.

- We are to show love to whoever needs our help.

Sometimes a person may need practical help, like *N* did today.

- You may come across someone at school who is really upset because some older children have taken their packed lunch.
- You could share your lunch with them or use the money in your pocket to buy them something from your school canteen.

Sometimes a person may need emotional help.

- You may come across someone who is very depressed because they have just lost someone that they loved very much.
- Maybe you could be the one who goes and listens to them and comforts them.

Other times a person may need spiritual help.

- You may come across someone who wants to know whether God exists or not.
- Maybe you could be the one who is able to answer their questions and help them hear the good news that Father God loves them and wants to give them His peace.

God calls each one of us to love our neighbour as ourselves.

- Our neighbour is anyone whom we come across who needs our help.
- Are you willing to stop what you are doing and help them?

[If you are leading an All Age Worship Service you may be interested in a humorous puppet script (PJG032) on the website dealing with the Parable of the Good Samaritan. See: <http://www.allageworshipresources.org/loving-my-neighbour/>]